

09/000301

GRAHAM & JAMES LLP
885 THIRD AVENUE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022
Tel: (212) 848-1000
Fax: (212) 688-2449

88-Rec'd PCT/PTO 20 JAN 1998

EM041141903US
Jan 20 1998

Box PET
Hon. Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

Joseph R. Keating
Reg. No. 37,1368

ATTENTION: PCT GROUP

January 20, 1998

Re: Kabushiki Kaisha Sega Enterprises d/b/a Sega Enterprises, Ltd.

Inventors: Shinji WATANABE
Nobuyuki KADOI

For:

Sir:

There are enclosed the following papers for filing the above application under 35 U.S.C. 371:

- ☒ This express request to immediately begin national examination procedures 35 USC 371(f).
- ☒ A copy of International Application PCT/JP96/02024 filed 7/19/96
- ☒ English translation of International Application
- ☒ Declaration under 35 U.S.C. 371 (c) (4)
- ☒ 13 sheets of formal/informal drawings (2 sets)
- ☒ International Search Report in English
- ☐ International Preliminary Examination Report in English
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement
- ☒ Assignment
- ☐ Preliminary Amendment
- ☒ Associate Power of Attorney
- ☒ Check in amount of \$ 1,094.⁰⁰ is enclosed for:
 - ☒ the filing fee of \$1,094.00, which was calculated as shown on the attached sheet.
- ☐ Recordation Form Cover Sheet and an Assignment of the inventor


This application is being filed under The Patent Cooperation Treaty, naming the United States Patent and Trademark Office as a Designated Office.

This application is based on International Application
PCT/JP96/02024 , filed July 19, 1996
which in turn corresponds to:
Japanese Application 7-183927 , Filed July 20, 1995

the priority of which is hereby claimed under the provisions of
35 U.S.C. 119, and the PCT implementing legislation, including 35
U.S.C. 363 and 365.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any
deficiency in the basic filing fee associated with this
communication under 35 USC 376(a)(4) to our Deposit Account No.
07-1855. Please do not charge our Deposit Account for multiply
dependent claims and/or claims in excess of 20. A duplicate copy
of this letter is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,
GRAHAM & JAMES LLP
Attorneys for Applicant

By: 
-JOSEPH R. KEATING -
For the Firm
Reg. No. 37,368



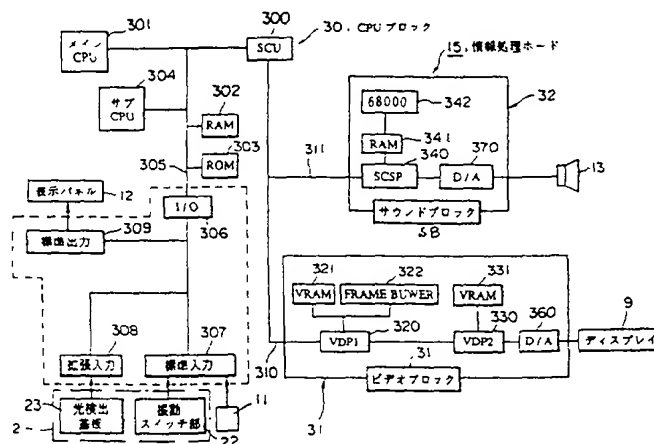
| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>(51) 国際特許分類6 G06F 3/037, 3/033, A63F 9/00, 9/22</p> | <p>A1</p> | <p>(11) 国際公開番号 WO97/04381</p> <p>(43) 国際公開日 1997年2月6日(06.02.97)</p> |
| <p>(21) 国際出願番号 PCT/JP96/02024</p> <p>(22) 国際出願日 1996年7月19日(19.07.96)</p> <p>(30) 優先権データ 特願平7/183927 1995年7月20日(20.07.95) JP</p> <p>(71) 出願人 (米国を除くすべての指定国について) 株式会社 セガ・エンタープライゼス (SEGA ENTERPRISES, LTD.)(JP/JP) 〒144 東京都大田区羽田1丁目2番12号 Tokyo, (JP)</p> <p>(72) 発明者; および</p> <p>(75) 発明者/出願人 (米国についてのみ) 渡辺真治(WATANABE, Shinji)(JP/JP) 角井信行(KADOI, Nobuyuki)(JP/JP) 〒144 東京都大田区羽田1丁目2番12号 株式会社 セガ・エンタープライゼス内 Tokyo, (JP)</p> <p>(74) 代理人 弁理士 稲葉良幸, 外(INABA, Yoshiyuki et al.) 〒105 東京都港区虎ノ門3丁目5番1号 37森ビル803号室 TMI総合法律事務所 Tokyo, (JP)</p> | | <p>(81) 指定国 CN, JP, KR, US, 欧州特許 (DE, ES, FR, GB, IT).</p> <p>添付公開書類 国際調査報告書</p> |

(54) Title: IMAGE PROCESSING UNIT, IMAGE PROCESSING METHOD, INPUT DEVICE FOR USE IN SAID METHOD, GAME MACHINE AND RECORDING MEDIUM

(54) 発明の名称 画像処理装置、画像処理方法、これに用いる入力装置及びゲーム装置並びに記録媒体

(57) Abstract

An apparatus in which an object moving by nonmechanical means is hit to provide an input signal. Video signals from an information processing board (15) are supplied to a display (9), which displays an object to be hit and other necessary images. A player hits the object on the display (9) by using an input device (2) shaped like a hammer. In consequence, an operation signal(Ss) is outputted from a vibration switch portion (22) of the input device (2). This operation signal(Ss) is supplied to the information processing board (15). The information processing board (15) causes a predetermined burst of light from the whole screen of the display (9) on the basis of the operation signal(Ss). As a result, a photodetector board (23) in the input device (2) produces an output, on the basis of which the processing board (15) determines the position at which the input device (2) hits the display (9) to check for a collision between the hit object and the input device (2).



- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 9 ... display | 301 ... main CPU |
| 12 ... display panel | 304 ... sub-CPU |
| 15 ... information processing board | 307 ... standard input |
| 22 ... vibration switch portion | 308 ... expansion input |
| 23 ... optical detection board | 309 ... standard output |
| 30 ... CPU block | SB ... sound block |
| 31 ... video block | |

SPECIFICATION

IMAGE PROCESSING DEVICE, IMAGE PROCESSING METHOD, INPUT DEVICE
USED THEREIN, GAME DEVICE, AND RECORDING MEDIUM

5

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to an image processing device,
and in particular to a game device. The present invention also
relates to an input device that generates a signal specifying
10 a position on a screen in a display means, and outputs the signal
to an image processing device. More specifically, the present
invention relates to an image processing device and its input
device, which are used in a game device. Even more specifically,
the game device relates to the field referred to as "whacking
15 games," such as the familiar "mole-whacking game," where a target
is struck with a hammer or the like.

BACKGROUND ART

In the past, game devices referred to as "whacking games"
20 have been constructed in such a way that something which is in
the shape of a mole, for example, and which is to be struck (herein
after referred to as "object") is mechanically moved up and down
or back and forth according to a prescribed system through
openings in the front of a case unit. The player strikes the
25 object with a special hammer in a contest with other players over
the strikes.

To determine the winner, the game device determines whether
or not the strikes are successful under a fixed system. When a
strike is judged to be successful, the game device awards a point,

which is displayed to the player, and the player can thus compete with other players over these points.

The following problems occur in conventional "whacking" games, however, because the object appears mechanically.

- 5 (i) The special hammer is usually furnished with a buffer material to soften the impact of the strike, but the mechanical structure from which the object emerges must be durable because of the substantial force and vigor with which the object is struck.

The design of the mechanical structure is thus limited. For
10 example, mechanical parts with high strength must be used, or the front of the object must meet certain requirements, such as the need to be formed into a spherical shape with excellent performance in dispersing stress. This limits the shape of the object, adding to the cost of manufacturing this type of game
15 device.

- (ii) Because the object pops up and drops down by means of a mechanical structure, the movement of the object is limited to a reciprocating movement either up and down or backward and forward, making it difficult to achieve more diverse object
20 movement.

An object of the present invention is thus to provide a device, or a peripheral structure thereof, that gives input by contact based on strikes or the like to an object while affording object movement that is not limited to a mechanical structure, and that
25 executes prescribed image processing based on this input. Another object of the present invention is to provide a game device employing this input.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

To achieve these objects, the present invention executes object movement by image processing means, and executes the prescribed processing based on contact data by input means to
5 display means for displaying the moving object.

The present invention comprises: image processing means for executing image processing to move an object; display means for displaying an image based on this image processing; contact input means that is movably provided and is brought into contact with
10 the display means by the operation of a player, and that generates a signal for computing the contact position when brought into contact with the display means; position computing means for computing the contact position based on signals from the contact input means; and determination means for determining whether or
15 not a prescribed relationship is established between the contact position and the object display position based on the computed results, wherein the image processing means provides prescribed image processing for the object when it has been determined by the determination means that a prescribed relationship has been
20 established.

In the present invention, it is determined whether or not there is a prescribed relationship between the location where the object is displayed and the point where the input means is brought into contact with the display means, for example, when
25 the point of contact is included in the region where the object is present (when the two collide), and the prescribed image processing is executed when it has been determined that such a relationship has occurred. The game device is constructed in such a way that points are awarded when such a relationship has

been determined, so as to determine the winner of the game being played with the input means.

For example, because the object movement is executed by image processing, there are fewer restrictions in the design of the object shape and movement, allowing more diverse shapes and movements to be freely provided.

In the present invention, the input means is operated so as to come into contact with the display means (or protective glass or the like). When the input means comes into contact with the display means, the data necessary for computing the contact point is output to the position computing means. The position computing means computes the point of contact based on this data, and the determination means determines whether or not a prescribed relationship has been established between the object and the input means based on the computed results. When it has been determined by the determination means that such a relationship has been established, the image processing means provides the prescribed image processing for the object, and the game device awards a point.

The display means is preferably a CRT display, and even more preferably a protective cover is provided on the front of the CRT display. The front of the image display surface or the protective cover of the display means is arranged so that the angle formed by the normal line in the center with respect to the perpendicular direction ranges from 3 to 17 degrees. Such an incline makes it relatively easier to bring the input means into contact with the display means.

The input means is furnished with a switch means allowing data to be output when brought into contact with the display means,

so as to prevent data from being unintentionally output when no contact is made. The switch means is preferably a vibration switch.

The device pertaining to the present invention further
5 comprises photoreceiver means for light emitted from the scanning lines of the CRT display serving as the display means. The position computing means begins the necessary processing to obtain the point of contact based on output from the switch means.

When a detection signal is input from the photoreceiver means,
10 data on the position of the scanning point obtained based on the scan synchronizing signal is incorporated, and the point of contact is computed based on this data, allowing the contact point to be accurately and rapidly computed.

Since the input means is furnished with a buffer to soften
15 the impact during contact at the position of contact on the display means, the input means and display means are more durable.

The present invention is also a recording medium on which is recorded the procedure by which the aforementioned method is executed by the processing device. Examples of recording media
20 include floppy disks, magnetic tape, photomagnetic disks, CD-ROM, DVD, ROM cartridges, battery back-up-equipped RAM memory cartridges, flash memory cartridges, and nonvolatile RAM cartridges. A recording medium is that on which data is recorded by any processing means (primarily digital data and programs),
25 allowing the desired function to be achieved by a processing device such as a computer or a dedicated processor.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is an oblique view depicting the image processing device and input device pertaining to the present invention;

Fig. 2 is an oblique view depicting the relationship in which
5 the display means and protective glass of the image processing device are arranged relative to each other;

Fig. 3 is a cross section depicting the relationship in which the display means and protective glass of the image processing device are arranged relative to each other;

10 Fig. 4 is a side view depicting the appearance of the input device pertaining to the present invention;

Fig. 5 is a cross section depicting the interior of the input device;

Fig. 6 is a block diagram depicting the structure of a
15 vibration switch component used in the input device;

Fig. 7 is a block diagram depicting the structure of a photodetector substrate used in the input device;

Fig. 8 is a block diagram depicting a schematic of the signal processing by the image processing device;

20 Fig. 9 is a block diagram depicting a detail of the signal processing by the image processing device;

Fig. 10 is a flow chart illustrating the main processing operations of the processing device;

Fig. 11 is an illustration of a game selection guidance image
25 in the main processing operations of the image processing device;

Fig. 12 is a flow chart for determining the position of the input device on the surface of the display means in the image processing device;

Fig. 13 is a timing chart of the position determining operations in the image processing device;

Fig. 14 is a schematic depicting a second embodiment of the input device;

5 Fig. 15 is a schematic depicting a structural example of a vibration switch used in the input device;

Fig. 16 is a schematic depicting a third embodiment of the input device; and

10 Fig. 17 is an illustration of the operation of the third embodiment of the input device.

BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

Embodiment 1 of the Invention

15

Embodiments of the present invention are described below with reference to examples depicted in the attached drawings.

Fig. 1 is an oblique view depicting the image processing device and input device pertaining to the present invention. The symbol
20 1 indicates the game device main unit, and the symbol 2 indicates input devices in the form of hammers (input devices). The image device main unit 1 comprises a trapezoidal case unit 3, a display board 4 standing upright from the surface of the case unit 3, and a box 5 located above the display board 4.

25 Cylindrical bodies 3a and 3b are provided for the sake of design at the top on either side of the case unit 3. The cylindrical bodies 3a and 3b are equipped with cylindrically notched housing components 7a and 7b. The handles of the hammers 2 can be housed in the housing components 7a and 7b.

The top surface 8 of the case unit 3 is designed so as to tilt lower on the player side (side opposite the display board 4), making it more convenient, as described below, for the player to strike the protective glass 10 with the hammer. A CRT display or video projector 9 (hereinafter simply referred to as "display"), for example, is provided as the display means at the top surface 8. As shown in Figs. 2 and 3, protective glass 10 is placed on the display 9. The protective glass 10 prevents the force of the impact from the hammer-type input device 2 from falling directly on the display 9. The protective glass is also considered the display means in the present invention. Ordinarily, as described below, the tip of the hammer is provided with a buffer means for the stress, such as a bellows made of resin. The protective glass is not an indispensable structural element in the present invention.

A conventional coin slot or other such device is provided in front under the display 9 (and protective glass 10). The coin slot or other such device 11 is constructed of a coin slot for entering coins, a coin return slot for returning coins, a coin feed handling circuit that gives notice on a data processing board described below that a coin has been inserted, or the like.

Display panels 12 etc. comprising 7 segments of light-emitting diodes or the like are located in the aforementioned display board 4 to display game results or other necessary related data. Speakers 13 and 13 are arranged at a prescribed distance from each other inside the box 5.

A data processing board 15 is provided inside the case unit 3 of the game device main unit 1. Examples of the main processes of the data processing board 15 include game start processing,

image signal formation processing, sound signal formation processing, input signal processing, screen coordinate position calculation (specification) processing, and score display processing. The display 9, hammer-type input devices 2, speakers 13, display panels 12, and coin slot or other related device 11 are electrically connected by signal wires not indicated in the figure to the data processing board 15.

The game device main unit 1 and the hammer-type input device 2 have the structure described above, allowing one or two players to hold a hammer 2 in their hands and use the hammer to strike moving objects such as mice (the objects to be struck) while watching the game screen displayed by the display 9 in a contest over the strikes such as the number of strikes or the time needed until the object is struck. The object should move in a way that cannot be anticipated or predicted by the player.

The layout of the aforementioned display and protective glass are illustrated in further detail in Figs. 2 and 3. The display 9 is set up at an incline so that the player side P_y of the screen on the display 9 is lower. The protective glass 10 is set up at a fixed distance d parallel to the display 9 over the screen on the display 9, and is supported and secured by a base 14. Since the display 9 and protective glass 10 are downwardly inclined toward the player side, the hand holding the hammer can easily reach the entire display, even when the display is relatively large. The incline is such that the normal line in the center of the display form an angle of preferably 3 to 20 degrees, more preferably 3 to 17 degrees, and even more preferably 5 to 15 degrees, with respect to the perpendicular direction.

The appearance and structure of the hammer-type input device 2 used in the image processing device are depicted by the side view in Fig. 4.

The input device 2 as a whole is in the form of a hammer, 5 consisting of a bar-shaped handle 16 and a cylindrical head 17.

The handle 16 is constructed in the form of a cylindrical bar with a flexible material. The head 17 is fixed at right angles to the tip of the handle 16, and a grip 18 is provided at the base. The tip of the head 17 is provided with a bellows as a buffer 10 to soften the impact when the input device is brought into contact with the protective cover. Switch means and detection means, described below, may be housed in the handle 16, head 17, and buffer 19.

Fig. 5 is a cross section depicting the internal structure 15 of the hammer-type input device. Switch means 20 housed in the hammer-type input device 2 outputs a trigger signal when the action of striking the protective glass 10 occurs. Here, the switch means 20 is provided in the form of a structure with a vibration switch 22 located in the head 17. When impact force 20 of a certain level reaches a vibration sensor (described in detail below), the switch is turned off, for example, and the vibration switch 22 outputs an operating signal.

The detection means 21 housed in the hammer-type input device 2 is provided to obtain signals for computing which position on 25 the display screen has been struck by the hammer. The detection means 21 is constructed of a photodetector substrate 23 provided in the interior of the head 17. The photodetector substrate 23 is described in detail below. In the photodetector substrate 23, light L from the scanning lines, which comes from below the bellows

buffer 19 in the figure, is guided to a photoreceiver sensor 25, is converted to an electrical signal by the photoreceiver sensor 25, is then treated to create a constant signal, and is output in the form of a photodetector signal. A photodiode, phototransistor, or the like may be used as the photodetector sensor 25. The operating switch of the vibration switch 22 and the output signal from the photodetector substrate 23 are fed to the data processing board 15 by signal lines 26 and 27, respectively.

Fig. 6 is a block diagram depicting the structure of the vibration switch 22 in the hammer-type input device 2. The element constituting the vibration switch 22 is integrally constructed on a substrate. A shock sensor 220 is an element outputting an electrical signal corresponding to the impact force when impact occurs. The output of the shock sensor 220 is connected to an amplifier circuit 221, and the output signal of the shock sensor 220 is amplified by the amplifier circuit 221 to the prescribed level.

The output of the amplifier circuit 221 is connected to one input terminal of a comparator 223, so that the output signal can be applied to the one input terminal of the comparator 223.

The reference voltage V_{rfl} from a reference voltage feed circuit 224 is applied to the other input terminal of the comparator 223.

The comparator 223 outputs a shock detection signal when the output voltage from the amplifier circuit 221 is greater than the aforementioned reference voltage V_{rfl} . The shock detection signal is managed in such a way as to allow the output of an operating signal S_s through the delay of a prescribed time for the adjustment of the processing time, for example, by a delay

circuit 225.

Fig. 7 is a block diagram depicting the structure of the photodetector substrate 23 in the aforementioned hammer-type input device 2. In the figure, the photoreceiver sensor 25 is an element that detects the light L from the display 9 and converts it to an electrical signal. As described above, the photoreceiver sensor 25 may be constructed of a photodiode, phototransistor, or the like. The output of the photoreceiver sensor 25 is connected to an amplifier circuit 231, and the output signal from the photoreceiver sensor 25 is amplified by the amplifier circuit 231 to the prescribed level. The output from the amplifier circuit 231 is connected to one input terminal of a comparator 233, allowing the output signal to be applied to the one input terminal of the comparator 233. The reference voltage Vrf2 from a reference voltage feed circuit 234 is applied to the other input terminal of the comparator 233. The comparator 233 outputs a photodetector signal Sh when the output voltage from the amplifier circuit 231 is greater than the aforementioned reference voltage Vrf2.

Fig. 8 is a block diagram depicting a schematic structure of the processing between part of the structure of the image processing device and the hammer-type input device in the present invention. In the figure, the vibration switch 22 inside the hammer-type input device 2 and the photodetector substrate 23 are connected through a signal line 26 and signal line 27, respectively, to the I/O interface 310 of a CPU block 30 in the data processing board 15. The data processing board 15 is described in the form of one consisting of the CPU block 30 and video block 31 in Fig. 8.

The CPU block 30 of the data processing board 15 runs the game according to a prescribed program, and specifies which position on the screen of the display 9 has been struck by the hammer-type input device 2 based on the photodetector signal from the photodetector substrate 23 when an operating signal from the vibration switch 22 is input, allowing this to be reflected in the contents of the game.

The video block 31 in the data processing board 15 sends the game image signals (video signal Vs and synchronizing signal Cs) prepared on the basis of the results processed by the board to the display 9. The data processing board 15 also gives data such as the score to the display panels 12 (see Fig. 1), and gives the prescribed sound signals to the speakers 13 in Fig. 1 (see Fig. 1). Processed images are thus displayed on the display 9, the necessary score or the like is displayed on the display panels 12 (see Fig. 1), and sounds are reproduced from the speakers 13 (see Fig. 1) according to the processing results.

Fig. 9 is a block diagram depicting a detail of the image processing device. In the figure, the data processing board 15 is constructed of a CPU block 30 for controlling the entire device, a video block 31 for controlling display on the game screen, a sound block 32 for producing resulting sounds and the like, and other power source circuits or the like.

The CPU block 30 is constructed of a SCU (system control unit) 300, main CPU 301, RAM 302, ROM 303, subCPU 304, CPU bus 305, input-output circuit block 306, reference input board 307, extension input board 308, reference output board 309, and the like. The main CPU 301 controls the entire device. The main CPU 301 has the same computing function as a DSP (digital signal

processor) inside, and can execute application software at high speeds.

The RAM 302 is used as a work area for the main CPU 301.

An initialization program for initializing processing, a
5 processing program for the entire game, and the like are written
to the ROM 303. The SCU 300 ensures the smooth input and output
of data between the main CPU 301, VDP (video display processor)
1 (320), VDP 2 (330), SCSP 340, and the like by controlling the
buses 305, 310, and 311.

10 The SCU 300 is equipped with a DMA controller inside, and
can send character data in the game to the VRAM 321 in the video
block 31. Application software for the game and the like can thus
be executed at high speed. The subCPU 304 collects operating
signals from the hammer-type input device 2 connected to the
15 reference input board 307 and photodetector signals from the
hammer-type input device 2 connected to the extension input board
308 according to commands from the main CPU 301, determines the
position of the hammer-type input device 2 on the screen, and
gives the necessary score from the reference input board 307 to
20 the display panels 12. The subCPU 304 thus controls peripheral
devices.

The main CPU 301 controls images related to characters
(including the object) in the game screen, for example, based
on operating data received from the subCPU 304. The video block
25 31 is equipped with a first VDP (video display processor) 320
for visualizing a two-dimensional sprite screen in which
characters are primarily superimposed over other background
images, and a second VDP 330 for visualizing scroll background
screens, synthesizing images with sprite image data and scroll

image data, clipping, and the like. Here, characters may also be composed of three-dimensional data involving the synthesis of a plurality of polygons instead of sprites.

The first VDP 320 houses a system register, and is connected
5 to VRAM (DRAM) 321 and a two-sided frame buffer 322. The game character image data is sent from the main CPU 301 through the SCU 300 to the first VDP 320, and is written to VRAM 321. The image data written to VRAM 321 is visualized, for example, in the visualizing frame buffer 322 in an 8-bit/pixel format. The
10 visualized frame buffer 322 data is sent to the second VDP 330 during display mode.

The data for controlling visualization is set from the main CPU 301 through the SCU 300 to the system register of the first VDP 320. The first VDP 320 controls visualization and display
15 according to commands set by the system register.

The second VDP 330, meanwhile, houses a register and color RAM, and is connected to VRAM 331. The second VDP 330 is also connected through the bus 307 to the first VDP 320 and SCU 300, and is connected through a D/A convertor 360 to the display 9.

20 The scroll image data for the second VDP 330 is defined from the main CPU 301 through the SCU 300 to VRAM 331 and color RAM.

Data for controlling the image display is similarly established in the register of the second VDP 330. Data defined at VRAM 331 is read out by the second VDP 330 according to the contents defined
25 in the register, and is converted to scroll screen image data showing the background for the characters. The display priority of the image data sent from the scroll screen image data and first VDP 320 is determined according to the definitions in the register, resulting in synthesis into the final display image data.

When the display image data is in palette format, the color data defined in color RAM is read out according to value by the second VDP 330, and the display color data is thus produced. When the display image data is in RGB format, the display image data serves as the display color data without modification. The display color data is output to the D/A converter 360. The D/A converter 360 produces image signals by adding synchronizing signals to the image data for output to the display 9. Game images are thus displayed on the display 9.

10 The sound block 32 is equipped with a DSP 342 for synthesizing voice according to PCM or FM format, and an SCSP 340 for controlling the DSP 342 or the like. The voice data produced by the SCSP 340 is converted to voice signals by the D/A converter 370, which are then output to the speakers 13.

15 The operation of the image processing device is described below with reference to Figs. 10 through 13 based on Figs. 1 through 9. First, the overall flow of operations is described using the main flow chart in Fig. 10 and the illustration of the game selection screen in Fig. 11. When a coin is inserted into a coin slot or other related device 11 (step 501 in Fig. 10),
20 the main CPU 301 is notified of this through the subCPU 304. The main CPU 301 produces a short and simple opening demonstration, and gives the data to the first VDP 320 and SCSP 340 through the SCU 300 (step 602). The first VDP 320 thus produces the opening demonstration images and gives them to the display 9. The
25 prescribed demonstration is thus displayed on the display 9. The necessary sound data is produced by the SCSP 340 and is given to the D/A converter 370. The D/A converter 370 converts and outputs analog signals to the speakers 13.

When the demonstration is completed, the main CPU 301 then sends the data for producing the game selection screen through the SCU 300 to the first VDP 320 (step 503). Four screens, for example, are thus produced by the first VDP 320 and are given to the D/A convertor 360. The image signals from the D/A convertor 360 are given to the display 9. A guide screen 600 giving a selection of four game modes 601, 602, 603, and 604, as shown in Fig. 11, for example, is displayed on the display 9. The four game modes 601, 602, 603, and 604 are provided so as to allow objects with different behavior to be selected, where, for example, the symbol 601 is "mouse-whacking," 602 is "alligator-whacking," 603 is "crab-whacking," and 604 is "bee-whacking."

Here, when the player selects one game from the guide screen 601 (step 503), the selected game is executed by the main CPU 301, allowing the player to play the game while watching the display 9 (step 504). When the game is over, the main CPU 301 determines whether the game has been cleared (step 505). When it has been determined by the main CPU 301 that the game has been cleared (step 505: YES), a "cleared" demonstration image is produced, and is sent through the SCU 300 to the first VDP 320 and SCSP 340 (step 506). The "cleared" demonstration image signals are thus formed by the video block 31, and the "cleared" demonstration sound signals are formed by the sound block 32.

The display 9 displays the images via the image signals. The "cleared" demonstration sound signals are reproduced as sound from the speakers 13. By concluding the "cleared" demonstration process, the main CPU 301 produces "game over" images, which are sent through the SCU 300 to the first VDP 320 and SCSP 340 (step 607). The "game over" images are thus provided on the display

9, and sounds indicating that the game is over are provided by the speakers 13.

When it is determined by the main CPU 301 that the game is not cleared (step 505: NO), meanwhile, "not cleared"

5 demonstration images are produced, and are sent through the SCU 300 to the first BDP 320 and SCSP 340 (step 508). "Not cleared" demonstration image signals are thus formed by the video block 31, and "not cleared" demonstration sound signals are formed by the sound block 32. The image signals are converted into images
10 by the display 9. The "not cleared" demonstration sound signals are reproduced in the form of sound from the speakers 13. By concluding the "not cleared" demonstration process, the main CPU 301 produces "game over" images and sends them through the SCU 300 to the first VDP 320 and SCSP 340 (step 506). Images
15 indicating that the game is over are thus provided on the display 9, and sounds indicating that the game is over are provided by the speakers 13.

Here, in the course of game play (step 503), an object in the form of a mouse, for example (the object to be struck,
20 hereinafter referred to as "object"), appears and disappears on the screen of the display 9. When the object appears, the player uses the hammer-type input device 2 to strike the object on the screen of the display 9. At this time, the subCPU 304 executes the process for receiving the operating signal Ss and
25 photodetector signal Sh from the hammer-type input device 2 (see Fig. 8) or for outputting output signals to display the score.

Here, the hammer-type input device 2 strikes the protective glass 10. As such, the vibration switch 22 of the switch means 20 in the hammer-type input device 2 is activated and outputs

an operating signal Ss. At this time, the subCPU 304 receives the signal Ss, and the main CPU 301 is notified. The main CPU 301 executes the image position-specifying operations. These image position-specifying operations are described with reference to Figs. 12 and 13. Here, Fig. 12 is a flow chart of the position-determining operations in the image processing device. Fig. 13 is a timing chart during the position-determining operations in the image processing device. In Fig. 13, the horizontal axis indicates time. Fig. 13a depicts a synchronizing signal Ck which rises every 1/60 (second) for television display, Fig. 13b depicts an operating signal Ss from a hammer-type input device 2, Fig. 13c depicts an image signal Vs sent to the display 9, Fig. 13d depicts a detection signal Sh from the hammer-type input device 2, and Fig. 13e depicts the measuring time for specifying the screen position.

In the video block 31, the synchronizing signal is produced in the form of a pulse every 1/60 (second), resulting in times t1, t2, t3, etc., as shown in Fig. 13a. As shown in Fig. 13c, an image signal Vs is formed every 1/60 (second) synchronously with the synchronizing signal by the video block 31, and is sent through the D/A convertor 360 to the display 9.

The game is now displayed on the display 9 and is in play (step 504 in Fig. 10). The subCPU 304 executes the process for receiving operating signals Ss from the hammer-type input device 2 (step 701 in Fig. 12). When the player holds the hammer-type input device 2 but does not operate it, no operating signals Ss are output from the hammer-type input device 2, so the subCPU 304 determines that no operating signal Ss is being detected (step 701: NO) and moves on to another process. The subCPU 304 executes

step 701 in cycles. That is, the subCPU 304 nearly always monitors the reference input board 307 to detect whether or not an operating signal Ss has been input from the hammer-type input device 2.

Here, during game play, the player uses the hammer-type input device 2 to strike prescribed positions on the display 9 screen.

The vibration switch 22 of the switch means 20 in the hammer-type input device 2 detects impact, and an operating signal Ss is output from the vibration switch 22 during the period of time t11 through t12 shown in Fig. 13(b). The subCPU 304 detects that the operating signal Ss has been input (step 701: YES), and the main CPU 301 is notified that the operating signal Ss has been input.

The main CPU 301 begins the processing needed to obtain the point of contact. Specifically, a command to brighten the entire screen of the display 9 is input by the main CPU 301 through the SCU 300 to the video block 31 so as to increase the brightness of the entire screen of the display 9 from the subsequent vertical synchronizing signal (time t2 timing in Fig. 13) in the first BDP 320 and 330, and the time is counted from the vertical synchronizing signal (t2) (step 702). The time is counted so as to obtain data relating to the aforementioned scanning line position (scanning point position) based on the vertical synchronizing signal.

In the video block 31, to obtain the photodetector signal Sh described below from the point in time at which the subsequent vertical synchronizing signal was input, such as the time t2 timing in Fig. 13(c), a high-brightness image signal is formed and is given to the display 9 while scanned. Image signals to increase the brightness are continuously output from this timing to the subsequent timing (time t2 to t3).

The main CPU 301 then waits for notification as to whether a photodetector output signal has been input from the subCPU 304 (step 703: NO step 703: No , etc.). In other words, in the absence of any notification that a photodetector signal from the subCPU 304 has been detected (step 703: NO), the main CPU 301 determines whether 1/60 (second) has elapsed from time t2 (step 704). When the main CPU 301 has determined that 1/60 (second) has not elapsed since time t2 (step 704: NO), it then determines whether or not there is any notification that a photodetector signal from the subCPU 304 has been detected (step 703).

Here, it is assumed that no notification of the detection of a photodetector signal has been sent from the subCPU 304 to the main CPU 301. At that time, when the main CPU 301 determines that 1/60 (second) has elapsed since time t2 (step 704: YES), it determines that the detection is negative (step 705). The main CPU 301 moves to the original game processing (step 706). The image signals are thus the image signals accompanying ordinary game processing from time t3 and thereafter, as shown in Fig. 13(c).

Meanwhile, at time t 21 in Fig. 13(d), the main CPU 301 is notified by the subCPU 304 that a photodetector signal has been detected (step 703: YES). The main CPU 301 counts the time to specify the screen position of the hammer-type input device 2 striking the screen of the display 9 by the timing of the time t2 of the synchronizing signal (see Fig. 13(e), step 707). That is, time is counted from the timing (t2) of the beginning of scanning to the time' (t 21) bright light is detected through the scanning lines. This time is the data relating to the position of the scanning lines obtained on the basis of the vertical

synchronizing signal.

When the time count is completed (step 707), the position at which the scanning lines run per scan timing is learned, and the coordinate position on the display screen struck by the hammer-type input device 2 is computed based on the counted time (step 708). That is, a screen component of the image displayed on the display 9 is roughly constructed of a period from one synchronizing signal to the next synchronizing signal. As such, the time elapsed from the synchronizing signal has a one-to-one correspondence to positions on the display 9 screen. The position on the display 9 screen can thus be specified by determining the time elapsed from the synchronizing signal.

When the position computation is completed, the main CPU 301 waits until 1/60 (second) has passed from time t2 (step 709: NO), and moves to the original game processing at time t3 and thereafter (step 706). The image signals are thus the signals accompanying ordinary game processing at time t3 and thereafter, as shown in Fig.13(c).

The main CPU 301 thus determines which position on the display 9 screen has been struck by the hammer head 17 of the hammer-type input device 2. The main CPU 301 then determines if the object has been properly struck, that is, whether or not a certain type of collision has successfully occurred between the hammer and object, on the basis of the determined results. This is referred to as collision determination below for the sake of convenience. It is ultimately determined whether or not the position of the hammer head 17 on the display 9 screen falls within the object region displayed on the display 9.

The affirmation of collision determination results in image

processing corresponding to the successful collision, that is, an image such as the disappearance of the object is given to the player. A model of the collision determination with respect to the object is usually given to accelerate and simplify collision determination in this collision determination. A rectangular model is usually given, where the center of the rectangle is modeled as the center of the object, and successful collision is determined on the basis of whether or not the position on the screen struck by the hammer is within the rectangular model frame.

10 Naturally, the collision is determined to be successful if the struck position is within the rectangular model frame. The degree of difficulty for achieving a successful strike can be adjusted by selecting a rectangular model of a desired size. The probability of striking a position within the frame is greater

15 with larger rectangular frames than with smaller rectangular frames, and the game difficulty can be lowered. The smaller the rectangular frame, the lower the probability of a successful collision and the greater the game difficulty. The collision determination here is rapidly processed by the subCPU 304, and

20 the main CPU 301 rapidly executes the necessary image processing while using the determined results.

In the embodiment of the invention described above, the time was counted with the aforementioned vertical synchronizing signal as the starting point so as to obtain data relating to

25 the position of the scanning lines based on the vertical synchronizing signal, but the following structure can also be adopted. H (horizontal) and V (vertical) counters are usually provided in ordinary video game devices to learn the current scanning points. When the counter values are used, and these

values are recorded in a latch register or the like when a photodetector signal has been detected, data relating to the scanning line position based on the vertical synchronizing signal can be obtained.

5 The H counter counts up every time the CRT display scanning points move once in the horizontal direction, and is set by the horizontal synchronizing signal. The V counter counts up per horizontal synchronizing signal every time the scanning lines move once in the vertical direction, and is set by the vertical
10 synchronizing signal. That is, the counter values constantly indicate the scanning line position on the display screen. These counter values are recorded in the register when a photodetector signal has been input. Data related to the scanning line position based on the horizontal synchronizing signal is thus recorded
15 in the register. The CPU 301 reads the register values, and on that basis may compute the coordinate position on the display
9 screen.

 This game device has the following advantages. The object that is struck is not mechanical but is provided by images,
20 allowing for greater freedom and fewer restrictions on the selection and design of the shape and behavior of the struck object.

 Images of the struck object, the background, or the like are created by software, so a plurality of games may be provided for the player with just one game set, for example. Since there is
25 no need to endow the struck object with mechanical durability, the cost can be lowered. The program of the game device described here can be used with household game devices using a recording medium such as a CD-ROM or ROM cassette.

As described above, in the first embodiment of the invention,

the movement of the object is realized by an image processing means, and the prescribed processing is managed on the basis of contact data by an input means to a display means where the moving object is displayed, so it is possible to give the object a variety of shapes and movements while providing object movement that is not dependent on a mechanical structure, and it is also possible to provide input based on contact, such as "whacking," to the object, and to execute the prescribed image processing based on this input.

10 In particular, a prescribed relationship between the region where the object is and the point of contact where the input device is brought into contact with the display means, such as whether or not the point of contact is in the region where the object is (whether or not a certain type of collision has occurred between
15 the two), is determined. Thus, even though the object is provided by image processing, a player or operator can still be provided with a state as to whether or not the object has been successfully "whacked." The game device pertaining to the present invention thus allows scored games to be played by means of this
20 determination.

The display means is provided with a protective cover, allowing the durability of the display means to be improved. This also affords a display means allowing the input means to be brought into direct contact while protecting the display.

25 The normal line of the image display surface of the display means forms an angle ranging from 3 to 17 degrees with respect to the vertical direction, thereby making it relatively easier to bring the input device into contact with the display means.

The input device is equipped with a switch means enabling

the output of contact data when brought into contact with the display means, thereby preventing the unintentional output of data when no contact has been made. A vibration switch successfully ensures this.

5 The apparatus in the first embodiment of the present invention can also be constructed in such a way as to be equipped with a photoreceiver means for light emitted from the scanning lines of the CRT display serving as the display means, wherein a position computing means begins a process necessary for
10 obtaining points of contact based on the output from the switch means, data on the scanning points obtained on the basis of scanning synchronizing signals is accepted when a detection signal is input from the photoreceiver means, and the point of contact can be computed on the basis of this data, allowing the
15 point of contact to be accurately and rapidly computed.

The input means is equipped with a buffer for softening the impact during contact at the location of contact with the display means, so as to improve the durability of the input means and display means.

20

Embodiment 2 of the Invention

Fig. 14 depicts a second embodiment, in which the input device of the present invention is described in further detail.

25 Fig. 15 is a schematic depicting an example of the structure of the vibration switch housed in a hammer-type input device 2a.

The hammer-type input device 2a comprises a switch means 20a which outputs an operating signal when the input device collides, and an optical guide means (optical fiber) 43 for

guiding light obtained from the aforementioned display 9 to a photodetector substrate 23a (exactly same structure as that of photodetector substrate 23 in Fig. 6) for obtaining a signal to specify the position on the display 9 screen. The hammer-type
5 input device 2a is also provided with a handle 16a and hammer head 17a in the same manner as the hammer-type input device described above. The hammer head 17a is constructed in cylindrical form, with an opening provided at one end of this cylinder. A buffer 19 in the form of a cylindrical bellows is
10 secured to the opening. Optic fiber 43 is supported and fixed while extending inside the handle 16a and head 17a toward the opening of the hammer head 17a, and the tip of the optic fiber terminates facing the open end of the buffer material around the base end of the buffer material 19.

15 The base end of the optic fiber 43 is connected to the photoreceiver sensor of the photodetector substrate 23a in the case unit 3. In the hammer described here, light coming from the opening of the hammer head 17a is guided through the optic fiber 43 to the photoreceiver sensor of the photodetector substrate
20 23a.

The switch means 20a housed inside the hammer-type input device 2a is composed of a vibration switch 22a provided inside the handle 16a, for example, as shown in Fig. 15. The vibration switch 22a is provided with an automatic reciprocating-type a
25 contact which consists of a weight 41 having a specific weight, a contact 42 that flexes according to the moment acting on the weight during contact, and a fixed contact 44.

When a certain level of impact force acts on the hammer head 17a, the flexible contact 42 bends down until in contact with

the fixed contact 44, the switch 22a closes, and the flexible contact 42 then automatically returns to the position shown in Fig. 15.

The symbol 45 is a base which is formed of an insulating material and which supports the contacts while keeping them apart.

The base is fixed inside the handle 16a. The signals from the switch mechanism 43 are input through a signal line 26 to the reference input board 307 of the CPU block 30.

In this hammer-type input device 2a, the photodetector substrate 23 is not housed inside the handle 16a or hammer head 17a but is located in the case unit side, so the durability of the photodetector substrate 23 can be improved, and erroneous photodetection potentially caused by direct impact or the like to the photodetector substrate 23 can also be avoided.

Embodiment 3 of the Invention

Fig. 16 is an oblique view depicting another embodiment of the present invention. The input device 2b in this embodiment is a sound detector type rather than the photodetector type described above. The input device 2b consists of a hammer 52 housing a switch means 20b, and sound detector means (microphones) 53a through 53d located at the four corners of the display 9.

The switch means 20b is connected to the reference input board 307 of the CPU block 30.

The microphones 53a through 53d located in the four corners are connected to the reference input board 307 of the CPU block 30 through 4 sound processing devices not shown in the figure.

Here, when the protective glass 10 on the screen of the

display 9 is struck with the hammer 52, resulting sound is produced by the compression of the bellows caused by the impact. The sound is captured by the microphones 53a through 53d. The sound signals output from the microphones 53a through 53d are given through the sound processing devices (not shown in figure), reference input board 307, and subCPU 304 to the main CPU 301. The main CPU 301 executes position computations for specifying the position on the screen based on the sound signals from the aforementioned sound processing devices when an operating signal Ss has been input from the switch 20b in the aforementioned input device 2b. Coordinate positions on the screen can thus be specified.

This position computing by the main CPU 301 is described in detail based on Fig. 17.

As shown in Fig. 17, X is the distance between microphones 53a and 53d as well as between 53b and 53c, while Y is the distance between microphones 53a and 53b as well as 53d and 53c. When the hammer 52 has struck a point P, the coordinate position on the screen can be specified by determining the coordinates (x,y) at point P. The location of microphone 53b is the point of origin (the point of origin may be another position such as 53a). The distances between point P and points 53a, 53b, 53c and 53c are A, B, C, and D, respectively (only B and C indicated in Fig. 17).

In Fig. 17, coordinates (x, y) are determined by the following equations. The equations are derived as follows.

For the x coordinate:

$$x = (B^2 + X^2 - C^2)/2X \quad (1)$$

or:

$$x = (A^2 + X^2 - D^2)/2X \quad (1')$$

For the y coordinate:

$$y = (C^2 + Y^2 - D^2)/2Y \quad (2)$$

or:

$$Y = (B^2 + Y^2 - A^2)/2Y \quad (2')$$

5 However, since X and Y can be known beforehand, they should
be recorded in memory as parameters. The distances A, B, C, and
D can be obtained by measuring the arrival time of the signal.
The time at which the hammer has struck can be known on the basis
of the switch means 20b, and the sound can be measured on that
10 basis, allowing it to be readily known how much time the sound
has taken to reach the microphones 53a through 53d when struck.
Here, the distances A, B, C, and D are as follows, where the times
needed to reach the microphones 53a through 53d are tA, tB, tC,
and tD, and the sound propagation rate on the protective glass
15 10 is s.

$$A = s \cdot tA, B = s \cdot tB, C = s \cdot tC, D = s \cdot tD \quad (3)$$

Times tA, tB, tC, and tD are measured as follows, for example.

A signal from the switch means 20b triggers the time count, and
the count is stopped when the microphones begin to output sound
20 signals. The counted results correspond to the arrival time.

Because the measurements sometimes do not go very well depending
on the acoustic waveform, the calculations are done with Equations
1 and 2 or 1' and 2' using data with stable output waveforms.

Both sets may be used in calculations, and the mean of the two
25 results may be used as the coordinates for point P.

The derivation of Equations 1 and 2 are described below.

In Fig. 17, the relation expressed by the following equation
is obtained from the cosine rule for the triangle P-53b-53c, where
u is the angle at point P-53b-53c.

$$C^2 = B^2 + X^2 - 2BX \cdot \cos u \quad (4)$$

From Fig. 17, it is clear that:

$$x = B \cdot \cos u \quad (5)$$

(5) is substituted into (4):

$$5 \quad C^2 = B^2 + X^2 - 2 \cdot x \cdot X \quad (4)$$

The following equation is thus obtained.

$$x = (B^2 + X^2 - C^2)/2X \quad (1)$$

The same is true for Equation (2).

Instead of determining the arrival times t_A , t_B , t_C , and
10 t_D , the difference between arrival times, that is, $(t_A - t_B)$,
 $(t_A - t_C)$, $(t_A - t_D)$, or the like may be determined, and point
P may be determined on that basis. The difference in arrival times
 $(t_A - t_B)$ means that the difference between the distance from
microphone 53a and the distance from microphone 53b is $s(t_A -$
15 $t_B)$. The point set meeting these conditions describes a
prescribed curve (hyperbola), where point P is at least on the
curve. The same is true of $(t_A - t_C)$, $(t_A - t_D)$, etc. Accordingly,
the intersection of these curves is point P.

In this method, there is no need to accurately determine
20 if the hammer 52 has struck. Since the switch means 20b need only
detect that the hammer 52 has struck, the detection mechanism
is simple. For example, if the hammer 52 has struck when the
microphones 53 have detected sound of at least a certain level,
the switch means 20b is unnecessary. This is advantageous for
25 actual measurement. Actual sound signals are complex, and it is
difficult to recognize a specific component such as the rise
component of a sound signal, so errors tend to occur in the
measurement of the times t_A , t_B , t_C and t_D . By contrast, to
determine $(t_A - t_B)$, $(t_A - t_C)$, $(t_A - t_D)$, etc., it is preferable

to compare two sound signals to check their difference from each other. Specifically, the correlation is determined as the two times are varied, and the maximum time deviation among the resulting correlations is ($t_A - t_B$). This treatment is capable
5 of accurate measurement by comparison of the sound signals in their entirety.

This input device 2b has a simple structure because the microphones 53a through 53d may simply be set up. Here, microphones were described as detecting the sound of contact
10 between the hammer and protective glass, but vibrations produced by contact between the hammer and protective glass may also be detected by a vibration sensor.

A structure that can be adopted to detect positions on the display screen struck by the hammer (Although described above,
15 it should be reiterated that the hammer does not directly strike the display; the hammer strikes the protective glass, and coordinates where the position of the struck protective glass corresponds to the display screen are computed.) is to set up an ultrasonic emitter in the hammer head, and to set up microphones
20 capable of receiving ultrasonic waves at the four corners of the display.

In this structure, an operating signal S_s is output from the switch means when the hammer strikes the protective glass over the display. When the operating signal S_s is input to the
25 CPU block, an emission signal is supplied at a constant time from the CPU block to the ultrasonic emitter. This allows output of ultrasound from the hammer head at a constant time from the time the glass is struck. The ultrasound is detected by the microphones in the four corners of the display and is sent to

the CPU block. This allows the position where the hammer head strikes the protective glass to be computed. In this structural example, ultrasound is emitted and is detected by microphones, allowing the coordinate position on the display to be specified, 5 so positions can be accurately detected without the erroneous detection of other sounds.

In the embodiment described here, microphones were located in the four corners of the display, but they may in theory be located in two corners.

10 A protective glass may be provided as a touch panel on the display screen so that signals from positions where the touch panel has been touched by an input means such as a hammer can be used as signals to compute the position.

As described above in the third embodiment of the invention, 15 the position where a hammer 52 strikes is detected by a sound (or vibration) detector means arranged in the four corners of the display 9, so there is no need to house a photodetector substrate or photoreceiver sensor in the hammer 52, and the structure of hammer 52 can be made simpler and more reliable.

20 It is also more light-weight, and is easier for a player to handle.

It is also possible to dispense with a switch means in the hammer 52, making the structure even simpler and more light-weight. In this case, there is no need for signal lines to connect the hammer 52 and the data processing board 15, resulting in better player 25 operability.

CLAIMS

1. An image processing device comprising:
image processing means for executing image processing to
5 move an object;
display means for displaying an image based on this image
processing;
contact input means that is movably provided and is brought
into contact with said display means by the operation of a player,
10 and that generates a signal for computing the contact position
when contacting said display means;
position computing means for computing said contact
position based on signals from the contact input means; and
determination means for determining whether or not a
15 prescribed relationship is established between said contact
position and said object display position based on the computed
results, wherein said image processing means provides prescribed
image processing for said object when it has been determined by
the determination means that a prescribed relationship has been
20 established.
2. An image processing device as defined in Claim 1,
wherein said contact input means comprises photoreceiver means
for obtaining the brightness data of said display means, and said
25 position computing means computes said contact position by
comparing the photoreception timing of said brightness data and
the display timing of said display means.
3. An image processing device as defined in Claim 2,

wherein said display means enhances the image brightness when said contact input means is brought into contact with said display means.

- 5 4. An image processing device as defined in Claim 1, wherein said contact input means comprises switch means for generating contact signals indicating contact with said display means, and said position computing means begins processing based on the contact signals of said switch means.

10

5. An image processing device comprising:

image processing means for executing image processing to move an object;

- 15 display means for displaying an image based on this image processing;

contact means that is movably provided and is brought into contact with said display means by the operation of a player;

- 20 input means that is located near said display means and generates a signal for computing the contact position when said contact means is brought into contact with said display means;

position computing means for computing said contact position based on signals from the input means; and

- 25 determination means for determining whether or not a prescribed relationship is established between said contact position and said object display position based on the computed results, wherein said image processing means provides prescribed image processing for said object when it has been determined by the determination means that a prescribed relationship has been established.

6. An image processing device as defined in Claim 5,
wherein said input means comprises a plurality of detectors for
sensing sound or vibration when said contact means is brought
5 into contact, and said position computing means computes said
contact position by comparing the detection timing of said
plurality of detectors.

7. An image processing device as defined in Claim 5,
10 wherein said contact means comprises switch means for generating
contact signals indicating contact with said display means, and
said position computing means begins processing based on the
contact signals of said switch means.

15 8. An image processing device as defined in any of Claims
1 through 7, wherein said determination means determines that
said prescribed relationship has been established when said
contact position is included within a predetermined range for
said object.

20

9. A game device, comprising:

an image processing device as defined in any of Claims 1
through 7; and

point calculating means for awarding points when it has been
25 determined by said determination means that said prescribed
relationship has been established.

10. A game device as defined in Claim 9, wherein the display
surface of said display means is inclined so that the angle between

the perpendicular direction and the normal line of the display surface ranges from 3 to 17 degrees.

11. A game device as defined in Claim 9, wherein said
5 display means comprises a protective cover that covers the display surface on which the images are displayed.

12. Contact input means that is movably provided and is
brought into contact with a display means by the operation of
10 a player, comprising:

switch means for generating contact signals during contact;
and

photoreceiver means for obtaining the brightness data of
said display means.

15

13. Contact input means as defined in Claim 12, wherein
said switch means is a vibration switch.

14. Contact input means as defined in Claim 12, wherein
20 said photoreceiver means comprises optical fiber for receiving the brightness data of said display means during contact, and a photodetector component for detecting the output of the optic fiber.

25 15. Contact input means as defined in Claim 12, comprising a buffer for softening the impact when in contact with said display means.

16. A method for image processing, comprising:

an image processing step for executing image processing to move an object;

a display step for displaying an image based on this image processing;

5 a contact input step involving contact near the display means by the operation of a player, and the generation of a signal for computing the contact position when contact has been made with said display means;

10 a position computing step for computing said contact position based on signals in the contact input step; and

a determination step for determining whether or not a prescribed relationship is established between said contact position and said object display position based on the computed results, wherein said image processing step provides prescribed
15 image processing for said object when it has been determined in the determination means that a prescribed relationship has been established.

17. A method for image processing, comprising:

20 an image processing step for executing image processing to move an object;

a display step for displaying an image based on this image processing;

25 a contact step involving contact near the display means by the operation of a player;

an input step for generating a signal to compute the contact position when contact has been made with said display means in said contact step;

a position computing step for computing said contact

position based on signals in the input step; and

a determination step for determining whether or not a prescribed relationship is established between said contact position and said object display position based on the computed results, wherein said image processing step provides prescribed image processing for said object when it has been determined in the determination means that a prescribed relationship has been established.

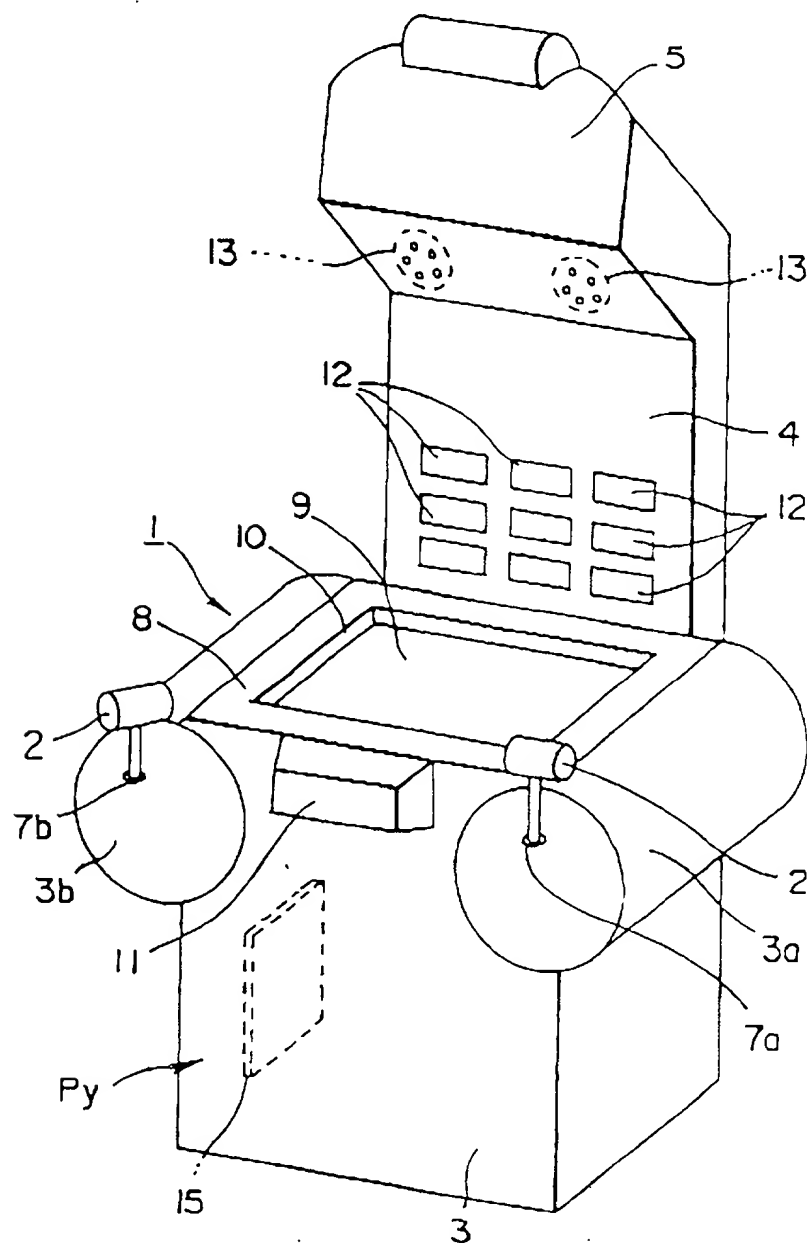
10 18. A recording medium on which is recorded the procedure
by which a method for image processing as defined in Claim 16
or 17 is executed by a processing device.

ABSTRACT

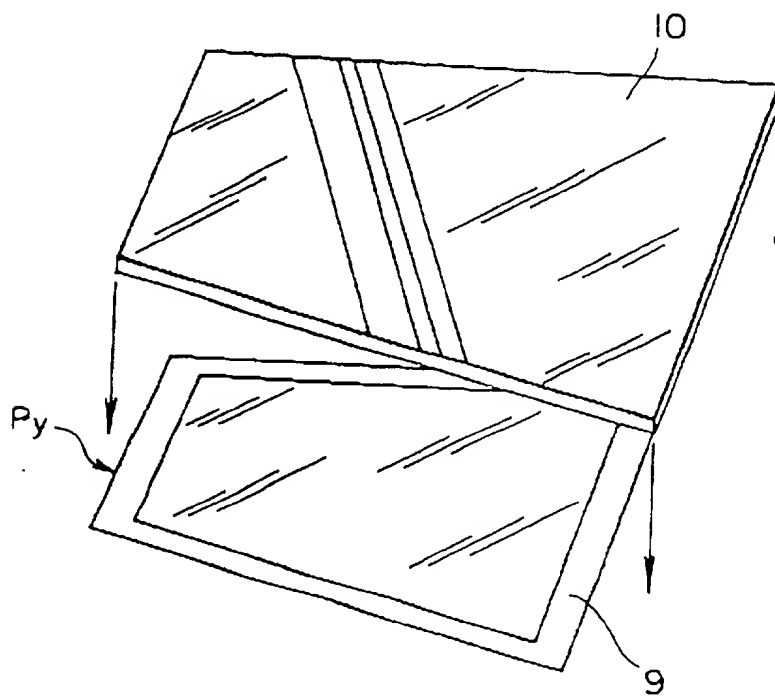
To provide a device capable of providing input force by striking to an object while providing object movement that is
5 not based on a mechanical structure.

Image signals from a data processing board 15 are supplied to a display 9. An image that is to be struck or another essential image is thus displayed on the display 9. The player uses an input device 2 in the form of a hammer to strike the object displayed
10 on the display 9. An operating signal Ss is thus output from a vibration switch 22 in the input device 2. The operating signal Ss is supplied to the data processing board 15. Based on the operating signal Ss, the entire image on the display 9 is brightened for the prescribed time by the data processing board
15 15. At this time, the photodetector signals detected by a photodetector substrate 23 in the input device 2 are supplied to the processing board 15. Based on the photodetector signal, the processing board 15 specifies the position where the input device 2 has struck the display 9, and determines the impact
20 between the struck object and the input device 2.

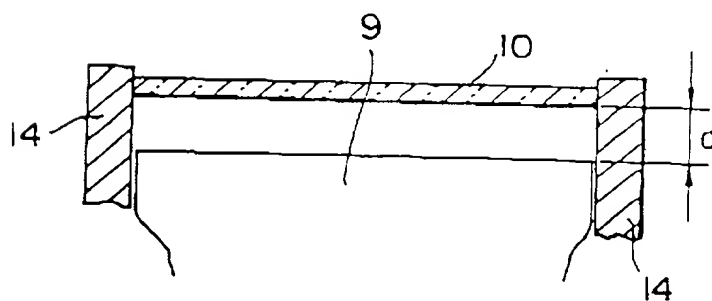
【図1】



【図2】

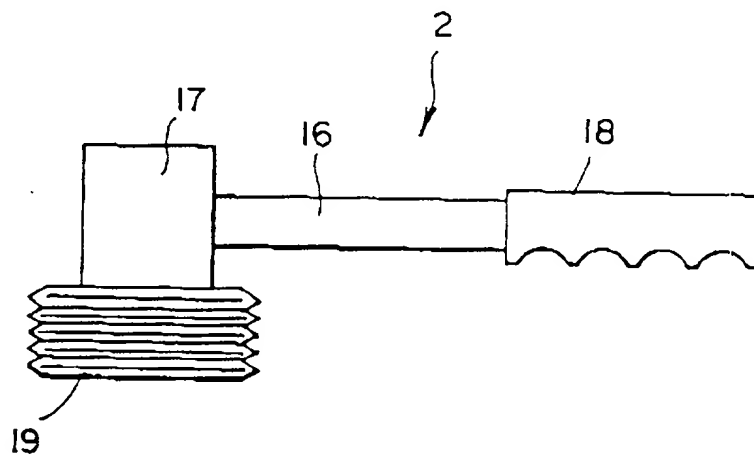


【図3】

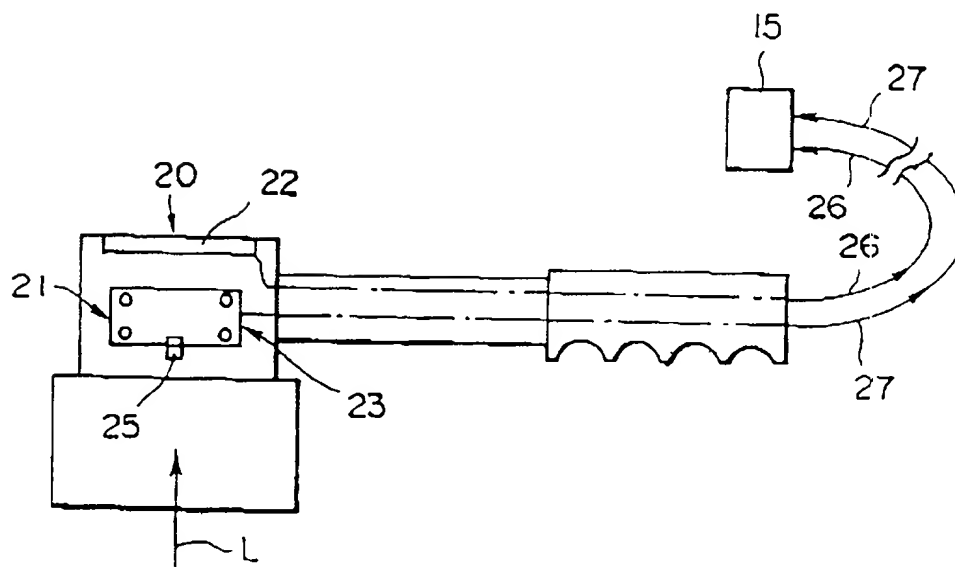


3/13

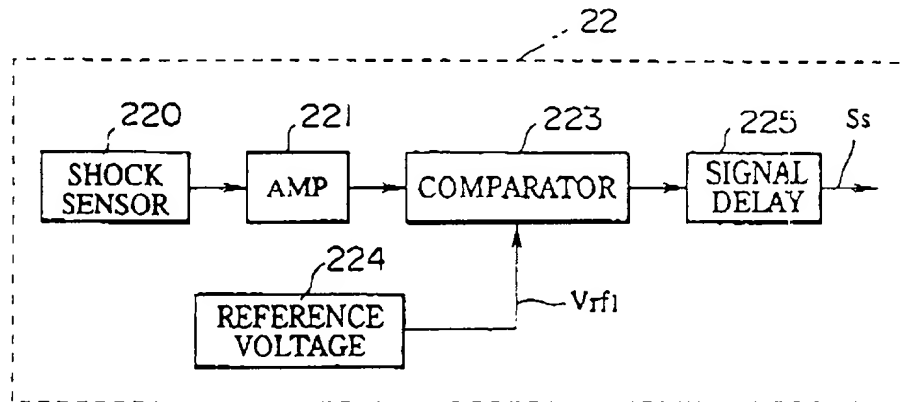
【図4】



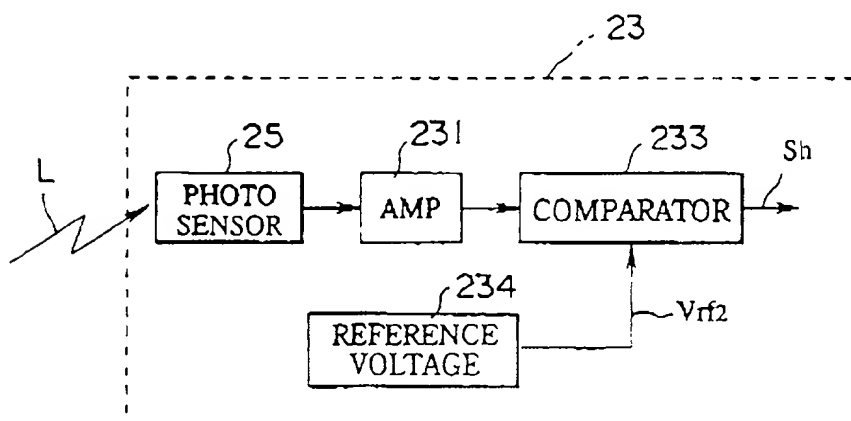
【図5】



【図 6】

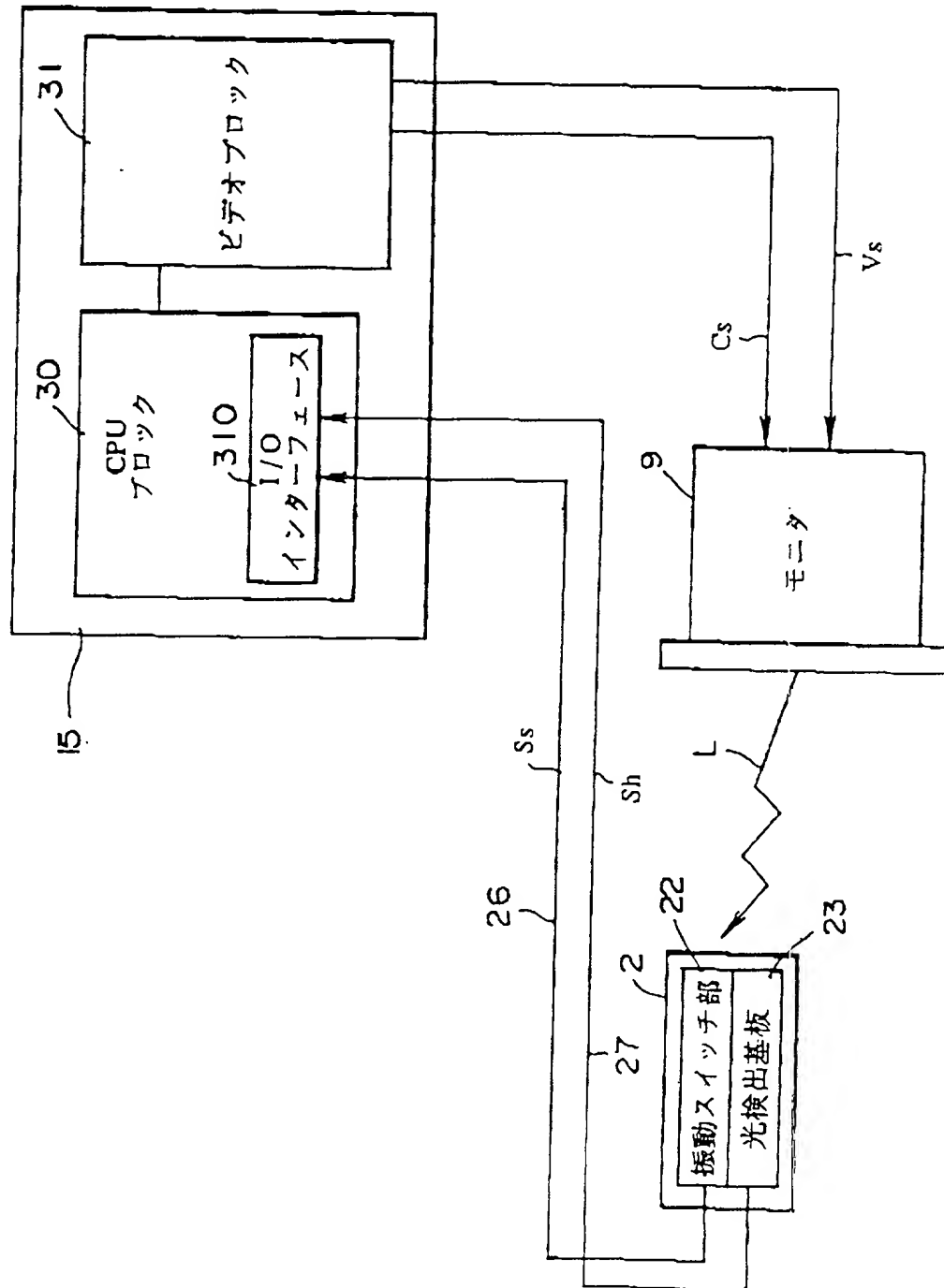


【図 7】

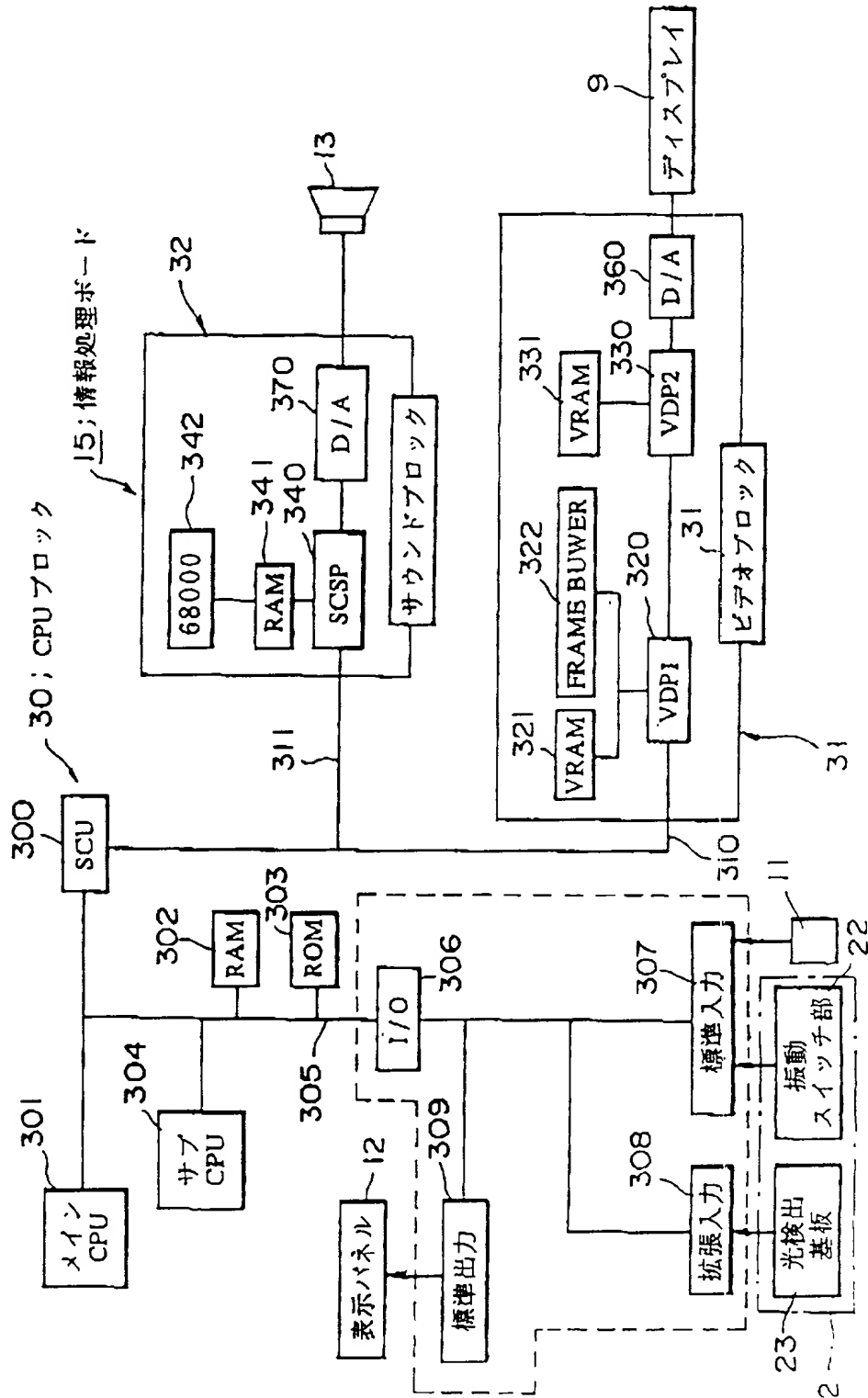


5/13

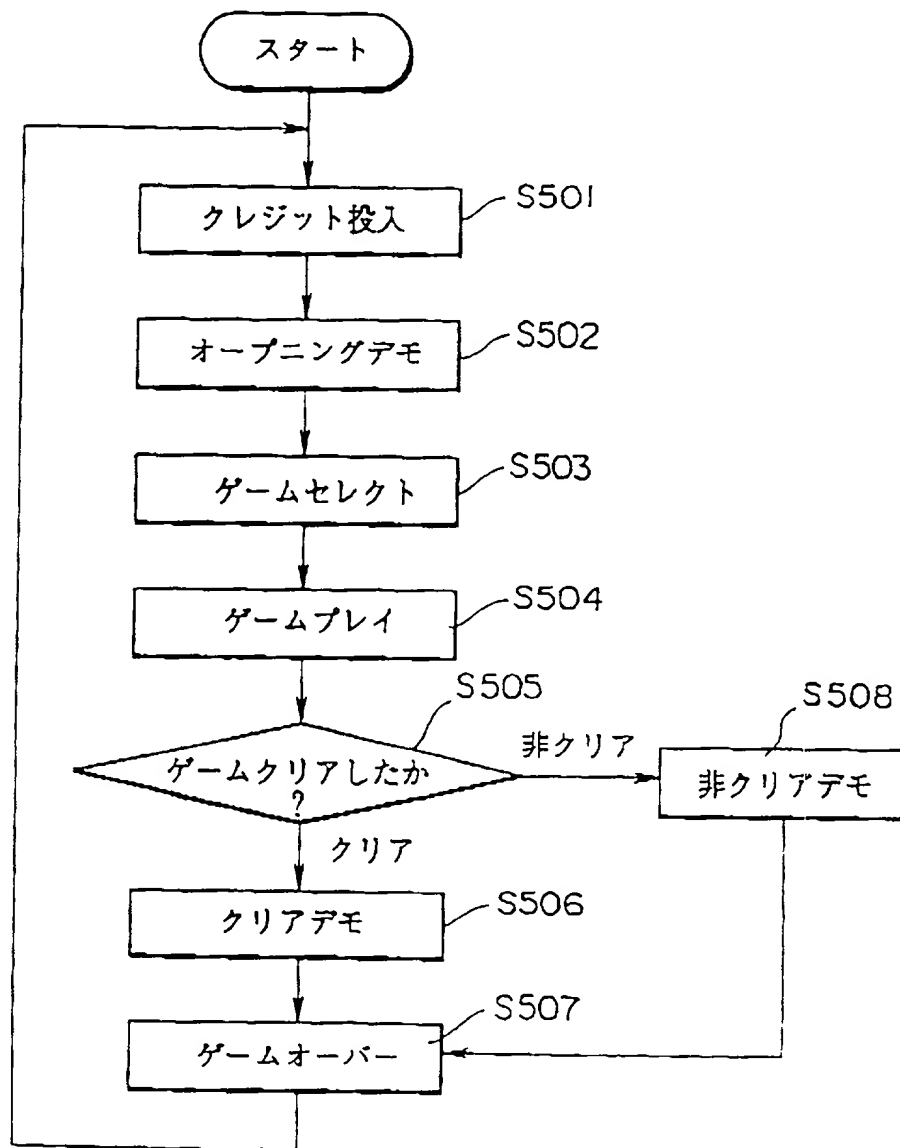
【図8】



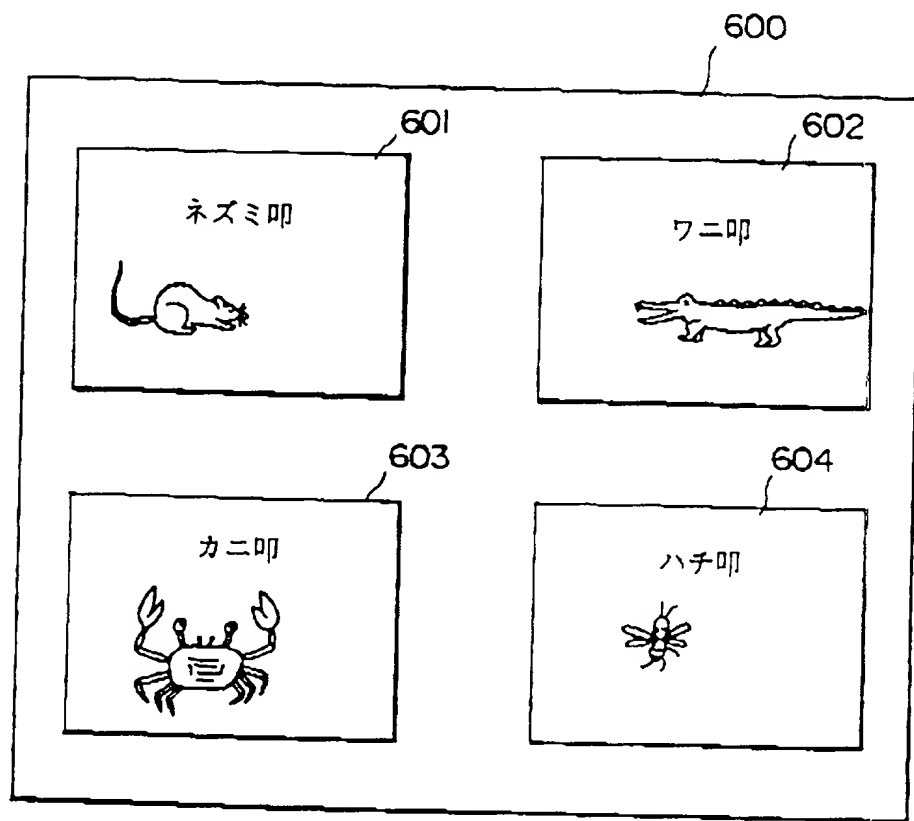
【図 9】



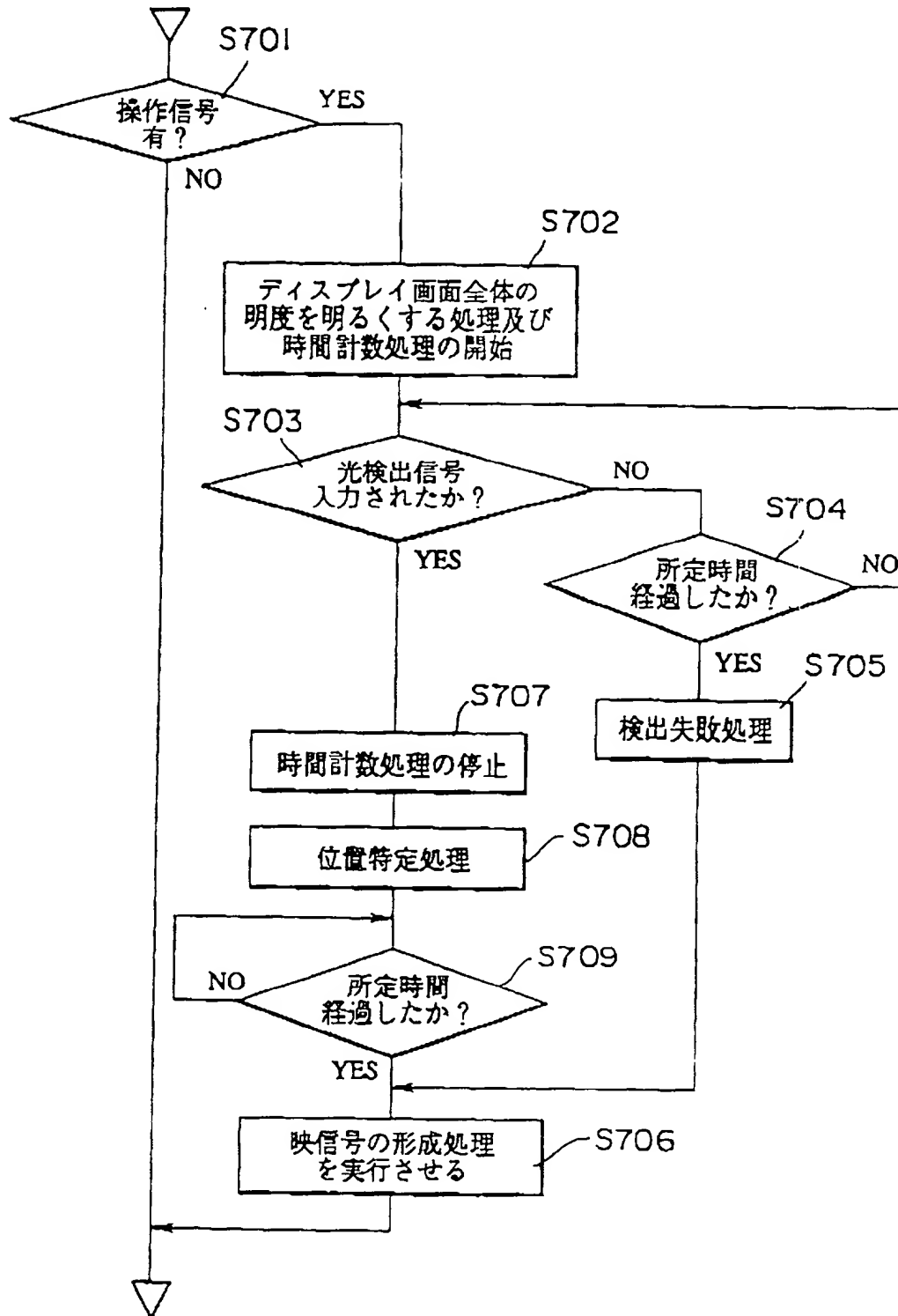
【図 10】



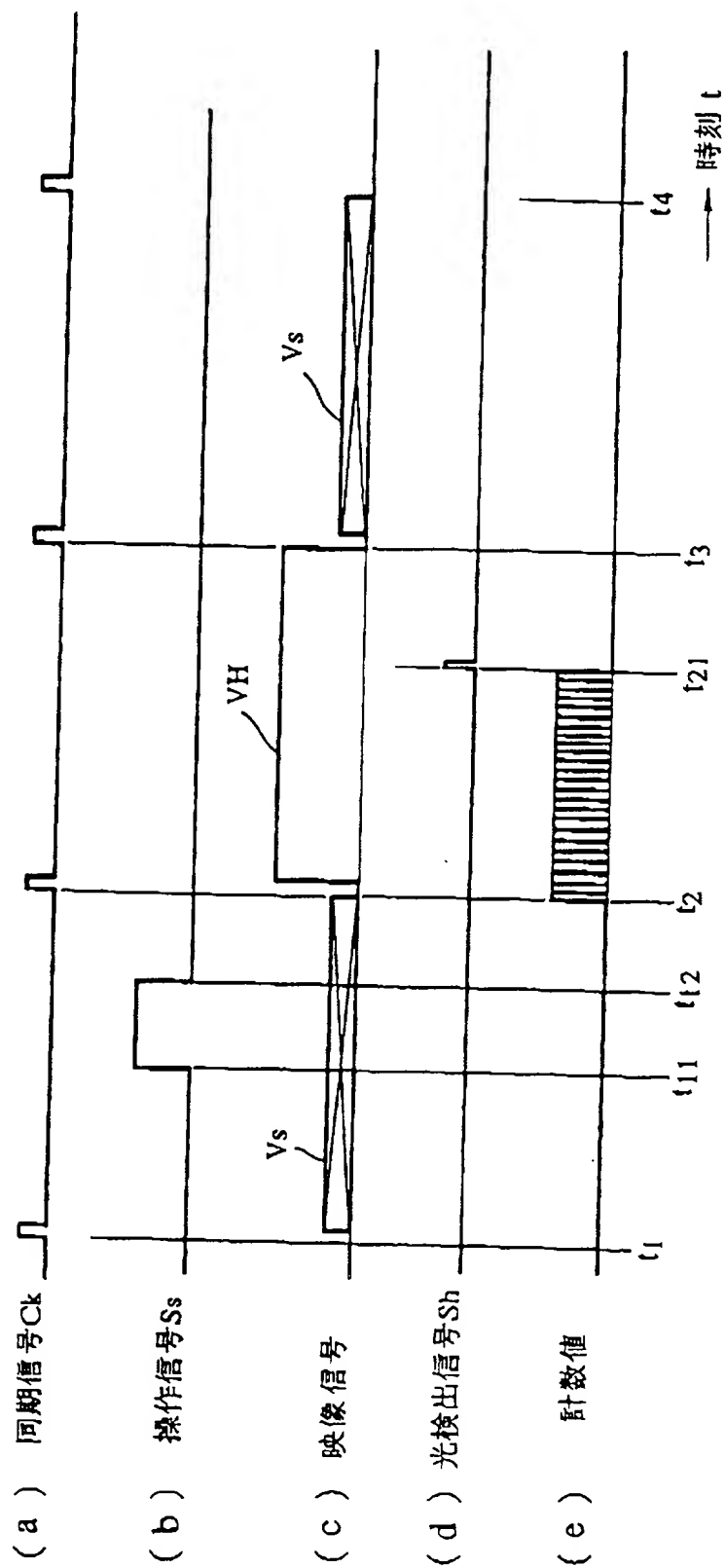
【図 11】



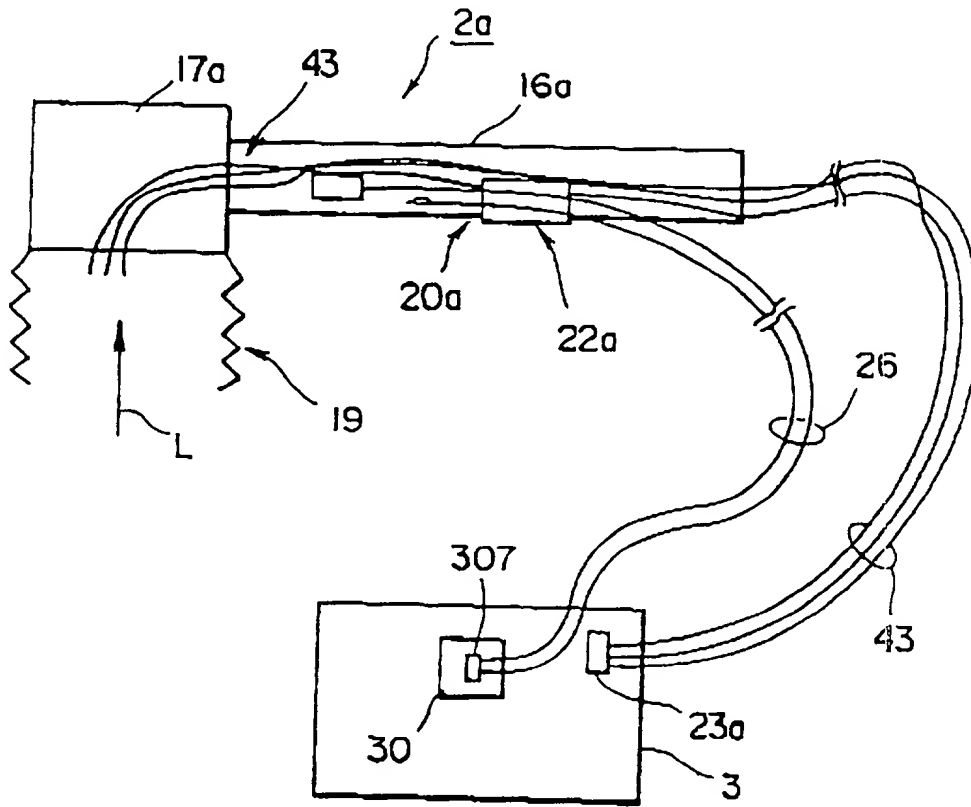
【図 12】



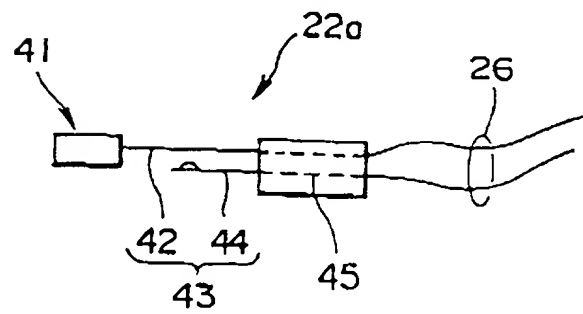
【 図 13 】



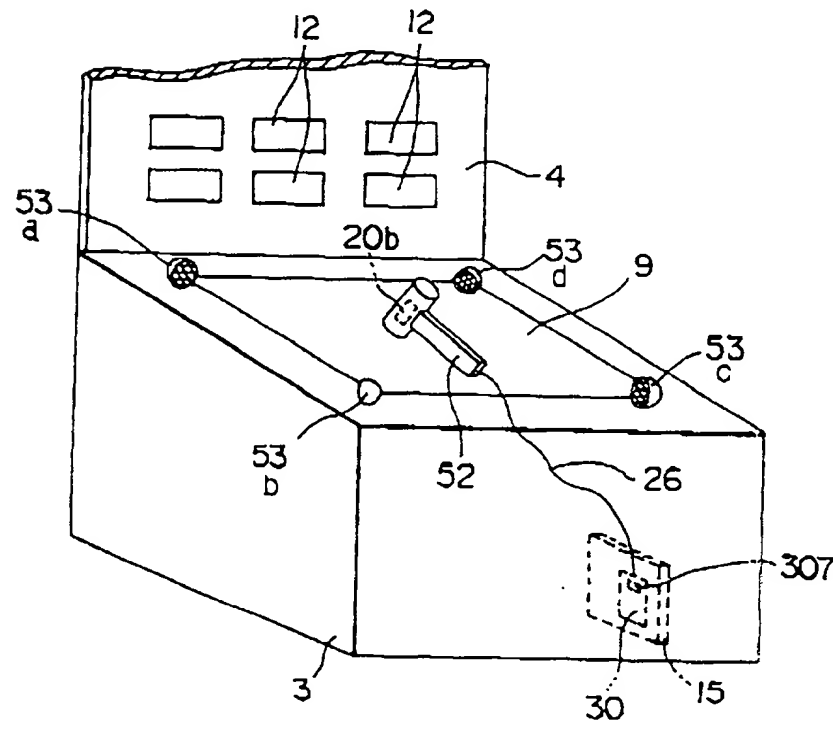
【図14】



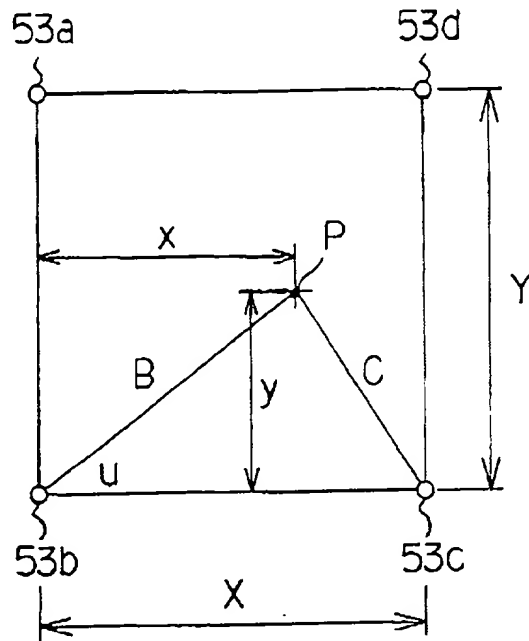
【図15】



【 図 16 】



【 図17 】



Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Declaration and Power of Attorney For Patent Application

特許出願宣言書及び委任状

Japanese Language Declaration

日本語宣言書

下記の氏名の発明者として、私は以下の通り宣言します。

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

私の住所、私書箱、国籍は下記の私の氏名の後に記載された通りです。

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated next to my name.

下記の名称の発明に関して請求範囲に記載され、特許出願している発明内容について、私が最初かつ唯一の発明者（下記の氏名が一つの場合）もしくは最初かつ共同発明者であると（下記の名称が複数の場合）信じています。

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

IMAGE PROCESSING DEVICE IMAGE

PROCESSING METHOD INPUT DEVICE USED
THEREIN, GAME DEVICE AND RECORDING

MEDIUM

上記発明の明細書（下記の欄で×印がついていない場合は、本書に添付）は、

the specification of which is attached hereto unless the following box is checked:

☐ 1996年7月19日
月 日に提出され、米国出願番号または特許協定条約
国際出願番号を _____ とし、
(該当する場合) _____ に訂正されました。

☐ was filed on July 19, 1996 (PCT)
as United States Application Number or
PCT International Application Number
PCT/JP96/02024 (PCT) and was amended on _____
(if applicable).

私は、特許請求範囲を含む上記訂正後の明細書を検討し、内容を理解していることをここに表明します。

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

私は、連邦規則法典第37編第1条56項に定義されるとおり、特許資格の有無について重要な情報を開示する義務があることを認めます。

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Japanese Language Declaration (日本語宣言書)

私は、米国法典第35編119条(a)-(d)項又は365条(b)項に基づき下記の、米国以外の国の少なくとも一カ国を指定している特許協力条約365(a)項に基づく国際出願、又は外国での特許出願もしくは発明者証の出願についての外国優先権をここに主張するとともに、優先権を主張している、本出願の前に出願された特許または発明者証の外国出願を以下に、枠内をマークすることで、示しています。

Prior Foreign Application(s)

外国での先行出願

7-183927
(Number)
(番号)

Japan
(Country)
(国名)

I hereby claim foreign priority under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119 (a)-(d) or 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or 365(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or PCT International application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Priority Not Claimed

優先権主張なし

20th July 1995
(Day/Month/Year Filed)
(出願年月日)

☒

(Number)
(番号)

(Country)
(国名)

(Day/Month/Year Filed)
(出願年月日)

☐

私は、第35編米国法典119条(e)項に基づいて下記の米国特許出願規定に記載された権利をここに主張いたします。

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

(Application No.)
(出願番号)

(Filing Date)
(出願日)

(Application No.)
(出願番号)

(Filing Date)
(出願日)

私は、下記の米国法典第35編120条に基づいて下記の米国特許出願に記載された権利、又は米国を指定している特許協力条約365条(c)に基づき権利をここに主張します。また、本出願の各請求範囲の内容が米国法典第35編112条第1項又は特許協力条約で規定された方法で先行する米国特許出願に開示されていない限り、その先行米国出願書提出日以降で本出願書の日本国内または特許協力条約国際提出日までの期間中に入手された、連邦規則法典第37編1条56項で定義された特許資格の有無に関する重要な情報について開示義務があることを認識しています。

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 120 of any United States application(s), or 365(c) of any PCT International application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT International filing date of application.

(Application No.)
(出願番号)

(Filing Date)
(出願日)

(Status Patented, Pending, Abandoned)
(現況：特許許可済、係属中、放棄済)

(Application No.)
(出願番号)

(Filing Date)
(出願日)

(Status Patented, Pending, Abandoned)
(現況：特許許可済、係属中、放棄済)

私は、私自身の知識に基づいて本宣言書中で私が行なう表明が真実であり、かつ私の入手した情報と私の信じるところに基づき表明が全て真実であると信じていること、さらに故意になされた虚偽の表明及びそれと同等の行為は米国法典第18編第1001条に基づき、罰金または拘禁、もしくはその両方により処罰されること、そしてそのような故意による虚偽の声明を行えば、出願した、又は既に許可された特許の有効性が失われることを認識し、よってここに上記のごとく宣誓を致します。

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Japanese Language Declaration

日本語宣言書

委任状：下記の発明者として、私は本出願の手続きを遂行し、同出願に関連する特許商標庁との一切の取引を取り扱うため、以下の弁護士及び（または）代理人をここに指名致します。（弁護士、代理人の氏名及び登録番号を明記のこと）

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith (list name and registration number)
Joseph R. Keating, 37368

書類送付先

Send Correspondence to:

Joseph R. Keating, Esq.

Graham & James LLP

885 Third Avenue, 24th Floor

New York, NY 10022

電話による直接連絡先: (名前及び電話番号)

Direct Telephone Calls to: (name and telephone number)

Joseph R. Keating, Esq.

(212) 848-1000

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 唯一または第一発明者 | 渡辺 真治 | Full name of sole or first inventor Shinji WATANABE |
| 発明者の署名 | 日付 渡辺 真治 1998年1月13日 | Inventor's signature SHINJI WATANABE date 13 Jan 1998 |
| 住所 | 日本国東京都大田区羽田1丁目2番12号 株式会社セガ・エンタープライゼス内 | Residence c/o SEGA ENTERPRISES, LTD., 2-12, Haneda 1-chome, Ohta-ku, Tokyo 144, Japan |
| 国籍 | 日本国 | Citizenship Japan |
| 私書箱 | 日本国東京都大田区羽田1丁目2番12号 株式会社セガ・エンタープライゼス内 | Post Office Address (same as residence) |
| 第二共同発明者(該当する場合) | 角井 信行 | Full name of second joint inventor, if any Nobuyuki KADOI |
| 第二発明者 | 角井 信行 1998年1月13日 | Second inventor's signature Nobuyuki KADOI date 13 Jan 1998 |
| 住所 | 日本国東京都大田区羽田1丁目2番12号 株式会社セガ・エンタープライゼス内 | Residence c/o SEGA ENTERPRISES, LTD., 2-12, Haneda 1-chome, Ohta-ku, Tokyo 144, Japan |
| 国籍 | 日本国 | Citizenship Japan |
| 私書箱 | 日本国東京都大田区羽田1丁目2番12号 株式会社セガ・エンタープライゼス内 | Post Office Address (same as residence) |

第三以降の共同発明者についても同様の情報及び署名を記載(Supply similar information and signature for third and subsequent joint inventors)
のこと)